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FROM: MOSCOW

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 1052, NOVEMBER 11, 5 PM

PRIORITY

SENT DEPARTMENT 1052, REPEATED INFORMATION LONDON 190, BONN
109, PARIS 176, BERLIN 46.

FOLLOWING ARE MY PRELIMINARY REACTIONS TO KHRUSHCHEV SPEECH
ON GERMAN QUESTION, WHICH MAY WISH MODIFY AFTER STUDY EAST
GERMAN DOCUMENT WHICH I HAVE NOT YET SEEN.

THREAT TO END QUADRIPARTITE STATUS BERLIN APPEARS TO HAVE
BEEN DELIBERATELY STATED IN EQUIVOCAL MANNER AND MAY BE
ONLY TRIAL BALLOON. DIFFICULT TO SEE, HOWEVER, HOW SOVIETS
COULD SIMPLY LET MATTER DROP PARTICULARLY IN VIEW COORDINATED
ACTION OF EAST GERMAN NOTE AND MEMORANDUM. I THEREFORE
CONSIDER THAT SPEECH REPRESENTS A MOST DANGEROUS MOVE ON
PART OF KHRUSHCHEV. IT IS TRUE THAT THIS IS ONLY ONE OF A
NUMBER OF RECENT INDICATIONS OF HARDENING OF SOVIET POLICY
WHICH APPEARS TO BE AIMING AT DELIBERATE INCREASE OF TENSION
AND IN THAT RESPECT MAY BE LESS SERIOUS THAN IF GERMAN
QUESTION ALONE WERE SINGLED OUT FOR MAXIMUM PRESSURE.

IT IS PROBABLE THAT KHRUSHCHEV HAS SEVERAL MOTIVES IN
PURSUING THIS GENERAL HARD LINE. ONE MAY BE THAT HAVING
FAILED TO BY SECURE SUMMIT MEETING BY SOFT APPROACH HE INTENDS
TO FORCE MEETING BY BUILDING UP TENSION TO ALMOST
INTOLERABLE PITCH. IF THIS IS PRIMARY MOTIVE, HOWEVER,
GERMAN PROBLEM IS ILL CHOSEN SINCE THIS IS THE ONE OF TWO
PROBLEMS SOVIETS REFUSE TO DISCUSS WITH US. I BELIEVE
THAT MORE LIKELY EXPLANATION OF GENERAL SOVIET POLICY IS
THAT KHRUSHCHEV HAS CONCLUDED THAT HE CANNOT ACHIEVE HIS
OBJECTIVES BY

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OBJECTIVES BY TOP LEVEL NEGOTIATIONS WITH PRESENT AMERICAN ADMINISTRATION AND THAT HE INTENDS TO SEE WHAT EFFECT STRONG PRESSURE AND HEIGHTENED TENSION WILL HAVE ON COHESION OF WESTERN POWERS. WE MAY EXPECT THAT SUCH PRESSURE WILL AS USUAL ALTERNATE WITH FRIENDLY GESTURES AND DECLARATIONS OF SWEET REASONABLENESS.

A FURTHER REASON FOR DELIBERATE HEIGHTENING OF TENSION MAY BE THAT KHRUSHCHEV CONSIDERS THIS WILL SERVE HIS PERSONAL OBJECTIVES AT 21ST PARTY CONGRESS. GERMAN AMBASSADOR THINKS THIS IS SO BUT THAT KHRUSHCHEV FAILS REALIZE THAT OTHER MEMBERS OF PRESIDUM ARE ALREADY WORRIED BY HIS TENDENCY TO TAKE UNNECESSARY RISKS IN FIELD FOREIGN AFFAIRS. GERMAN AMBASSADOR ALSO BELIEVES THAT WE HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY BY TAKING A CALCULATED RISK TO BRING ABOUT HIS DOWNFALL. I DO NOT MYSELF THINK OUR POLICY SHOULD BE GUIDED BY SUCH CONSIDERATIONS AND DO NOT BELIEVE WE KNOW SUFFICIENTLY WELL THE WORKINGS OF THE SOVIET SYSTEM TO GAUGE THE RISKS OF SUCH TACTICS NOR TO PREDICT THE RESULT. ON THE OTHER HAND I DO NOT THINK WE SHOULD BE DETERRED FROM TAKING ANY ACTION WE CONSIDER NECESSARY BECAUSE OF THE EFFECT ON THE FORTUNES OF KHRUSHCHEV.

SO FAR AS THE GERMAN QUESTION ITSELF IS CONCERNED KHRUSHCHEV CLEARLY IS AIMING AT FORCING OUR RECOGNITION IN SOME FORM OF THE EAST GERMAN REGIME. I BELIEVE HE SEES THAT WITH THE COMPLETION IN THE NEXT FEW YEARS OF WEST GERMAN REARMAMENT, INCLUDING THE STATIONING OF ATOMIC WEAPONS THERE, THE POSITION OF THE EAST GERMAN REGIME WILL BECOME EVEN MORE PRECARIOUS AND HE FEARS THAT WEST GERMAN INTERVENTION IN AN EAST GERMAN REVOLT UNDER SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES MIGHT FACE THE SOVIET UNION WITH THE CHOICE OF ALMOST CERTAIN WORLD WAR OR THE LOSS OF EAST GERMANY AND SUBSEQUENTLY OF MOST OR ALL OF HIS SATELLITE EMPIRE. HAVING FAILED TO MANEUVER THE WEST INTO AT LEAST TACIT RECOGNITION OF THE STATUS QUO IN EASTERN EUROPE THROUGH SUMMIT TALKS HE FEELS COMPELLED TO RESOLVE THIS ISSUE NOW BEFORE WEST GERMAN REARMAMENT IS COMPLETED. AN ADDED FACTOR IS THE FAILURE OF THE EAST GERMAN REGIME TO WIN ANY POPULAR

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WIN ANY POPULAR SUPPORT AND THE DILEMA THE SOVIETS FACE IN ATTEMPTING TO CARRY OUT A STALINIST POLICY IN THE REST OF EASTERN EUROPE, AND IN POLAND IN PARTICULAR, SO LONG AS THE EAST GERMAN SITUATION IS SO UNSTABLE.

GERMAN AMBASSADOR THINKS THAT SPEECH WILL UNDOUBTEDLY CHANGE CHARACTER OF GERMAN NOTE TO SOVIET GOVERNMENT BUT DOUBTS THAT THIS WAS IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION IN SOVIET ACTION. HIS GENERAL CONCLUSION IS THAT WE ARE MOVING FROM A DIPLOMATIC WAR OF POSITION INTO ONE OF MANEUVER AND HE AGREES WITH ME THAT THIS FACES US WITH AN EXCEEDINGLY DANGEROUS SITUATION.

I SHALL SUBMIT SHORTLY COMMENTS ON POSSIBLE U. S. ACTIONS TO COUNTER LATEST SOVIET MOVES.

THOMPSON

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